

**TOWN OF BUCKFIELD  
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING  
WARRANT  
FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024**

TO: Cameron Hinkley, a Resident of the Town of Buckfield in the County of Oxford and State of Maine.

GREETINGS: In the name of the State of Maine, you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Buckfield in said County and State qualified by law to vote in Town affairs, to appear at the Municipal Center in said Town on Tuesday, the 13<sup>th</sup> day of June 2023 at 8:00 AM, then and there to act upon Article 1 and by secret ballot on Articles 2 through 47 as set out below, the polling hours therefore to be from 8:00 AM until 8:00 PM.

**ARTICLE 1:** To Elect a **Moderator** to preside at said meeting.

**ARTICLE 2:** To elect one (1) **Selectman** for a 3-year term beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2026.

**ARTICLE 3:** To elect one (1) **Selectman** for a 3-year term beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2026.

**ARTICLE 4:** To elect one (1) **RSU # 10 School Board Director** for a 3-year term beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2026.

**ARTICLE 5:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$297,142** for the **ADMINISTRATION** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$288,100 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*The Administration budget includes personnel costs for the Town Manager, Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Board of Selectmen, related office supply and equipment costs, and expenses for professional services such as the Town Report printing, tax bill printing, annual audit, public notice advertising, elections, dues, and routine legal services.*

*This is an increase of \$9,042 due to employer costs associated with health insurance and Maine State Retirement and the inclusion of annual TRIO maintenance fees that were paid out of ARPA last fiscal year.*

**ARTICLE 6:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$64,980** for **INSURANCE** expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$59,800 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*The Insurance budget is based on anticipated premium costs in fiscal year 2023-2024. Included are property and automobile coverages, public officials' liability, workers compensation, and coverage for fire and rescue. The Town is self-insured for unemployment insurance.*

*This is a \$5,180 increase resulting from increased insurance premiums.*

**ARTICLE 7:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$30,500** for **ASSESSING** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$31,050 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*The Assessing department currently consists of a part-time contracted Assessor and Assessor's Assistant who are both Certified Maine Assessors, costs of tax map updates, along with training and associated expenses.*

*This is a \$550 decrease as this position is contracted rather than a Town employee. Therefore, employer costs do not apply.*

**ARTICLE 8:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$41,380** for the **MUNICIPAL CENTER** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$30,500 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*The Municipal Center was built in 1928 and originally used as a school. The last major renovation of the building was in the 90s. The building is in need of exterior repairs as well as interior repairs.*

*This is a \$10,880 increase resulting from increases in utility costs such as electricity and water. Contracted mowing is also now factored into this account. The proposed budget includes \$15,000 for maintenance to address some of the issues discussed in the previous paragraph.*

**ARTICLE 9:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$138,780** for the **FIRE DEPARTMENT** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$129,300 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*The Fire Department budget is offset by revenue generated through a contract with Hartford. Fiscal Year 2023-2024 proposed Fire Department Revenue is \$26,000 (to be accepted under Article 30).*

*Proposed Budget: \$138,780*

*Proposed Revenue: \$26,000*

*Total to be raised through taxation: \$112,780 (\$56.87 Per Capita)*

This is an increase of \$9,480 primarily due to an increase in wages. On call firefighters are currently paid minimum wage. This establishes a staggered pay scale based on training and certification level.

**ARTICLE 10:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$338,225** for the **RESCUE DEPARTMENT** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$325,650 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*The Rescue Department budget is offset by revenue generated through contracts with Hartford and Sumner as well as billing revenue collected for emergency calls and transfers. Fiscal Year 2023-2024 proposed Rescue Department revenue is \$257,000 (to be accepted under Article 30).*

*Proposed Budget: \$338,225*

*Proposed Revenue: \$257,000*

*Total to be raised through taxation: \$81,225 (\$40.96 Per Capita)*

*This is an increase of \$12,575 due to proposed wage increases for EMTs and Paramedics. Buckfield Rescue currently pays our providers much lower wages than neighboring services. This proposed increase will help to maintain coverage and attract more licensed providers.*

**ARTICLE 11:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$8,250** for **ANIMAL WELFARE** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$8,500 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This is a decrease of \$250 from last fiscal year with no reduction in service.*

**ARTICLE 12:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$8,900** for **STREETLIGHTS** for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$7,700 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This is an increase of \$1,200 due to electricity rate increases. The Town Manager is currently working with CMP to convert our streetlights to LEDs at no cost to the Town in order to reduce our annual costs.*

**ARTICLE 13:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$61,000** for **HYDRANT RENTAL** expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$61,000 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This budget remains flat. The Town anticipated a 15% rate increase last year which did not occur so the budget remains the same. The Buckfield Village Corporation is however requesting a 20% rate increase which if approved means the Town will need to increase this budget in FY 2024-2025.*

**ARTICLE 14:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$26,060** for the **RECREATION DEPARTMENT** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$32,850 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*The Recreation budget includes costs associated with maintaining facilities as well as costs associated with operating youth sports programs. Some of these operating expenses are offset by revenue generated through various sponsorships, registration fees, and other fundraisers.*

*This is a decrease of \$6,790 with no reduction in program offerings.*

**ARTICLE 15:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$900** for **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND EVENTS** for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$900 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This budget remains flat. Costs include the purchase of grave markers and flags for Veteran's grave sites.*

**ARTICLE 16:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$3,250** for **SOCIAL SERVICES** for fiscal year 2023-2024? Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$3,250 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This budget remains flat.*

**ARTICLE 17:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$2,000** for **GENERAL ASSISTANCE** expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$2,000 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*The State of Maine reimburses the Town 70% of the total General Assistance granted to residents. This budget remains flat.*

**ARTICLE 18:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$1,970** for the **OLD CHURCH ON THE HILL** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$500 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*The Old Church on the Hill operating expenses consist of electricity and the cost of contracted mowing for the fiscal year. This is an increase of \$1,470 due to the addition of contracted mowing and electricity rate increases.*

**ARTICLE 19:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$52,075** for the **ZADOC LONG FREE LIBRARY DEPARTMENT** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$54,475 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This is a decrease of \$2,400 with no reduction to hours or services.*

**ARTICLE 20:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$196,850** for **DEBT SERVICE** for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$204,285 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*Fire Rescue Building: \$71,280  
2021 Cat Excavator: \$21,700 – Three (3) Remaining Payments  
2009 International: \$12,120 – Two (2) Remaining Payments  
2012 Peterbilt: \$19,275 – Two (2) Remaining Payments  
2005 E-One Quint: \$27,475 – Nine (9) Remaining Payments  
2023-2024 Revaluation: \$45,000 – Final Payment*

*This is a decrease of \$7,435 due to the payoff of the Lifepak Monitor Lease and a lower-than-expected payment on the 2005 E-One Quint.*

**ARTICLE 21:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Treasurer to act on the Town's behalf and obtain a loan for a principal amount not to exceed \$70,000 and authorize the Town Manager and Select Board to act on the Town's behalf and purchase a 2023 Ford F-550 for the Public Works Department and raise and appropriate through taxation **\$16,225** for the annual payment of said loan.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This proposed truck would replace the current 2016 Ford F-250 which would be traded in to reduce the purchase price. Trade in value is estimated to be between \$16,000-20,000. The new truck would come with a dump body, sander, and new plow. The current 2016 Ford F-250 is beginning to require much more maintenance and the plow is in need of replacement. The trade in value on the vehicle will drop dramatically if mileage exceeds 100,000 miles. The proposed truck is a heavier duty chassis that could exceed the workload that the current F-250 is expected to do, while offering the utility of an on-board sander and dump body for year-round utility.*

*Loan Principal: \$70,000  
Term: 5 Years  
Estimated Interest Rate: 5%  
Annual Payment: \$16,224.93  
Estimated Total Interest: \$11,124.63*

**ARTICLE 22:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$17,660** for the **PUBLIC WORKS COMPLEX** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$24,000 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This is a decrease of \$6,340 primarily due to the cost savings associated with the installation of a waste oil furnace.*

**ARTICLE 23:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$360,477** for the **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$361,050 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This is a decrease of \$573.*

**ARTICLE 24:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$419,400** for the **SUMMER ROADS** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$515,400 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This is a decrease of \$96,000 due to a reduction in the paving budget. The proposed budget would cover the second phase of planned paving projects for 2022 through 2023. Paving costs have continued to remain higher than years prior driven by material costs and labor increases. The approved bid to pave East Buckfield Rd and Bear Pond Rd was \$807,378.20.*

**ARTICLE 25:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$118,880** for the **WINTER ROADS** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$116,380 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This is an increase of \$2,500 due to increased material costs (sand and gravel).*

**ARTICLE 26:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$15,200** for the **CEMETERY MAINTENANCE** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$6,500 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*The Cemetery Maintenance operating expenses include contracted mowing. This would allow the Public Works department personnel to focus their efforts on road maintenance and other necessary projects throughout the summer. This is an increase of \$8,700 primarily due to contracted mowing. The costs to contract these services is much lower than hiring seasonal personnel to perform the same function.*

**ARTICLE 27:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$226,928** for the **SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING DEPARTMENT** operating expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024. Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$214,000 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This is an increase of \$12,928 due to increased costs associated with waste disposal and fuel surcharges.*

**ARTICLE 28:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate through taxation a total of **\$10,000** for the **EMERGENCY CONTINGENCY** for fiscal year 2023-2024 to be used by the Select Board as they deem advisable to meet unanticipated expenses and emergencies that occur during the year? Should this article fail, the 2022-2023 approved budget of \$20,000 shall be used.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*This is a decrease of \$10,000 which returns this budget line back to historic figures.*

**ARTICLE 29:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Treasurer, upon approval of the Select Board, to apply the revenue received in excess of the 2022-2023 proposed Rescue Department Revenue of \$245,000, to the Rescue Department Ambulance Reserve account and be used for the future purpose of replacing and/or remounting ambulances.

*The ambulance replacement plan relies on this allocation of excess revenue to cover the costs associated with remounting or replacing aging units. Without allocating this revenue the Town will have to finance the refurbishment or replacement of ambulances as needed.*

**ARTICLE 30:** To see if the Town will vote to accept and appropriate the projected Local Revenues of **\$757,175** to reduce the 2023-2024 Appropriations Budget.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*Approval of this article will reduce the overall tax commitment. Rejecting this article will result in a higher mil-rate.*

**ARTICLE 31:** To see if the Town will vote to accept and appropriate the projected State Revenues of **\$377,100** to reduce the 2023-2024 Appropriations Budget?

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*Approval of this article will reduce the overall tax commitment. Rejecting this article will result in a higher mil-rate.*

**ARTICLE 32:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to act in the Town's best interest and execute an Agreement between the Town of Buckfield and the Town of Sumner to continue to jointly operate the Solid Waste and Recycling Transfer System for a term of ten (10) years.

**ARTICLE 33:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate up to **\$250,000** from the undesignated fund balance and apply the total amount to reduce the fiscal year 2023-2024 appropriations budget.

**RECOMMENDED BY THE SELECT BOARD AND THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*Approval of this article will reduce the overall tax commitment. Rejecting this article will result in a higher mill-rate.*

**ARTICLE 34:** To see if the Town will vote to set November 15, 2023 as the due date for the first half of the 2023-2024 property taxes and May 15, 2024 as the due date for the second half of the 2023-2024 property taxes; after which interest will be charged at the rate of **4%** per year, or part thereof, on taxes unpaid after the date in accordance with 36 M.R.S. § 505(4).

*Per 36 M.R.S. § 505(4), the maximum rate of interest that can be charged is 8%; the Treasurer of State sets this rate each year.*

**ARTICLE 35:** To see if the Town will vote in accordance with 36 M.R.S. § 506(A), to pay no interest on refunds of overpaid or abated taxes.

*36 M.R.S. § 506(A) provides the rate of interest may not exceed the rate set for delinquent taxes, nor be less than that rate reduced by 4%.*

**ARTICLE 36:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the payment of tax abatements approved by the Select Board from the property tax overlay or, if necessary, from undesignated fund balance.

**ARTICLE 37:** To see if the Town will vote to accept prepayment of taxes to the Tax Collector for fiscal year 2023-2024 prior to the date of commitment and to pay no interest thereon.

**ARTICLE 38:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to sell by bid or auction or on such terms and conditions they deem to be in the best interest of the Town, such equipment, vehicles, or furniture valued at or over \$5,000 as are no longer necessary for Town operations.

**ARTICLE 39:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Manager to sell by bid or auction, or on such terms and conditions he/she deem to be in the best interest of the Town, such equipment, vehicles, or furniture valued under \$5,000 as are no longer necessary for Town operations.

**ARTICLE 40:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board and Town Manager to apply for State, Federal, and other grants on the Town's behalf for purposes they deem to be in the best interests of the Town; to accept such grants, including, when necessary, the authority to sign contracts and related documents and accept conditions of approval; and to appropriate and expend such grant funds for the authorized purposes for fiscal year 2023-2024.



**ARTICLE 41:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to negotiate and execute multi-year contracts not to exceed three years, including but not limited to, contracts or agreements in the following areas: auditing, tax assessing, solid waste disposal, fire, rescue, equipment purchasing, leasing and maintenance agreements?

**ARTICLE 42:** To see if the Town will vote to have all future Annual Town Meeting warrant articles decided by Secret Ballot instead of having an open-floor Town Meeting, until such time the Town votes to return to open-floor Town Meeting?

**ARTICLE 43:** To see if the Town will vote to increase the property tax levy limit established for the Town of Buckfield by State Law, but only in the event that the municipal budget approved under the preceding Articles will result in a tax commitment that is greater than the property tax levy limit?

**ARTICLE 44:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board, on behalf of the Town, to sell and dispose of any Real Estate acquired by the Town for nonpayment of taxes thereon, on such terms as they deem advisable and to execute Quit Claim Deeds for such property? Except that the Municipal Officers shall use the special sale process required by 36 M.R.S. § 943-C for qualifying homestead property if they choose to sell it to anyone other than the former owner(s)?

**ARTICLE 45:** To see if the Town will vote to repeal the **Town of Buckfield Fire Chief Selection Ordinance** effective June 30, 2024?

*Currently the Fire Chief is elected by the Fire Department members and then appointed by the Select Board for a term of 4 years. Repealing this ordinance would allow the Town Manager and Select Board to fill this position as needed in the same manner as all other department heads.*

**ARTICLE 46:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate **75% of the refund** of Snowmobile Registrations, received annually from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to the Streaked Mountaineers Snowmobile Club for maintaining trails and bridges, on the condition that those trails be open to the public for snowmobile purposes at no charge in the snow season.

*The amount of the refund for the current year ending June 30, 2023 was \$1,257.80 (\$943.35 – 75%).*

**ARTICLE 47:** To see if the Town will vote to allow the Town Treasurer to deposit **\$4,792.00** representing the proceeds of a surplus equipment sale held by sealed bid on December 6, 2022 into the Highway Equipment Reserve account.

*Items sold were all Public Works equipment, no longer needed by the Town.*

Given under our hands at Buckfield, Maine this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A.D. 2023.

**Town of Buckfield Select Board**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Hand, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Azalea Cormier, Vice Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sandra Fickett, Selectman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Janet Iveson, Selectman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Iveson, Selectman

The Registrar of Voters is available at the Town Office in the Municipal Center Tuesday-Friday during regular business hours for the purpose of accepting new registrations and to make address, name and/or enrollment changes. In addition, the Registrar of Voters will be available at the Annual Town Meeting from 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM.

A True Copy. Attest: \_\_\_\_\_, Brittany Parrott, Town Clerk

**RETURN**

Pursuant to the within warrant, I have notified and warned the inhabitants of said Town, qualified to vote in Town affairs by posting an attested copy of the within Warrant at; the Buckfield Municipal Center, the Buckfield Post Office, Tilton's Market, Buckfield Mall, and R.E. Lowell Lumber, being conspicuous public places within Buckfield on \_\_\_\_\_, 2023 which is at least (7) days next prior to the date of the meeting.

Dated at Buckfield, Maine this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cameron Hinkley, Resident of Buckfield